

Message Text

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TAGS: PINS PFOR GR TU

SUBJECT: GOVT STATEMENT CONDEMNS IRRESPONSIBLE PRESS
REPORTING ON GREEK-TURKISH ISSUES

1. A GOVERNMENT SOURCE, REFERRING TO RECENT PRESS
REPORTS, STATED ON THE EVENING OF FEB 29 THAT "A SECTION
OF THE GREEK PRESS WAS UNFORTUNATELY FOLLOWING THE
EXAMPLE OF CERTAIN TURKISH NEWSPAPERS BY CULTIVATING CONCERN
AND BY EXAGGERATING CERTAIN EVENTS." THE SOURCE ADDED THAT
THE GREEK GOVERNMENT CONDEMNED SUCH "IRRESPONSIBLE TACTICS"
BECAUSE THEY CONTRIBUTED EITHER WILLINGLY OR UNWILLINGLY TO
CAUSING RELATIONS BETWEEN TURKEY AND GREECE TO DETERIORATE.

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2. DURING THE PAST WEEK, MOST GREEK NEWSPAPERS GAVE EXTENSIVE COVERAGE TO THE TURKISH MANEUVERS HELD IN THE AEGEAN FEB 25-26. WHILE SOME JOURNALS ATTEMPTED TO MAINTAIN AN OBJECTIVE STANCE ON THIS MATTER, OTHERS WERE MUCH MORE SUBJECTIVE, IF NOT IMAGINATIVE, IN THEIR TREATMENT SUGGESTING INTER ALIA THAT A CONFRONTATION WOULD OCCUR BETWEEN GREEK AND TURKISH FORCES, AND THAT THE LIKLIHOOD OF AN INCIDENT WAS REAL. IN THESE LATTER PAPERS IT ALMOST APPEARED THAT A CONSCIOUS EFFORT WAS BEING MADE TO GENERATE CONCERNS AND ANXIETIES--IF NOT AN INCIPIENT WAR FEVER.

3. WHILE THE GOVT STATEMENT (PARA 1 ABOVE) COULD WELL HAVE BEEN AIMED AT THE MORE EXTREMIST ELEMENTS OF THE TOTAL JOURNALISTIC OUTPUT DURING ALL OF LAST WEEK, IT MIGHT ALSO HAVE HAD IN ITS SPECIAL SIGHTS TWO LEAD EDITORIALS FROM YESTERDAY MORNING'S (FEB 29) NEWSPAPERS, I.E. ACROPOLIS (CONSERVATIVE-PRO GOVT) AND TO VIMA (LIBERAL, OPPOSITION). BOTH ARTICLES TOOK A MOST SERIOUS VIEW OF TURKISH POLICY, TACTICS AND BEHAVIOR AND ISSUED CALLS FOR A FUNDAMENTAL CHANGE OF GREEK POLICY (I.E. A HARDER LINE) IN THE FACE OF TURKISH PROVOCATION. THEIR EMOTIONAL APPEAL WAS TO FUNDAMENTAL GREEK PATRIOTISM AND NATIONAL HONOR, INVOKING NATIONAL UNITY TO CONFRONT PERILS FROM THEIR EASTERN NEIGHBOR. A DISQUIETING THREAD OF JINGOISM WAS ALSO APPARENT IN THE ACROPOLIS PIECE. THE FACT THAT TWO PAPERS--BASED IN DIFFERENT SEGMENTS OF THE POLITICAL SPECTRUM--SHOULD ISSUE SUCH SIMILAR CLARION CALLS TO THE GOVERNMENT FOR A HARDENED STANCE ON A CRUCIAL NATIONAL ISSUE--IS OF SOME SIGNIFICANCE.

4. THE TO VIMA EDITORIAL ENTITLED "A CHANGE IN TACTICS IS IMPERATIVE" ASSERTED THAT THE RECENT TURKISH AEGEAN EXERCISES WERE NOT SIMPLE MILITARY MANEUVERS BUT RATHER A STUDIED PSYCHOLOGICAL ACTION OF RECONNAISSANCE, I.E. IT WAS A "PAPER EXERCISE" AIMED AT MEASURING THE DEGREE TO WHICH GREECE WOULD YIELD. THE PIECE GOES ON TO SAY THAT THE PRINCIPLE OF "MIGHT MAKES RIGHT" IS WHAT PREVAILS IN TURKEY TODAY, BUT TAKES NOTE OF THE FACT THAT ARMAMENTS PER SE DO NOT DETERMINE SUPREMACY BUT THAT THE HUMAN ELEMENT IS VITALLY LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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IMPORTANT. GREEK "SUPREMACY" IS CONSTITUTED BOTH OF THAT HUMAN ELEMENT AND OF THE CONVICTION THAT "JUSTICE IS ON OUR SIDE--BOTH AS TO THE AEGEAN AND AS TO CYPRUS." FINALLY, THE EDITORIAL STATES GREEK BASIC SUPREMACY IS FOUNDED ON THE UNITY OF THE PEOPLE, ESPECIALLY "THE UNITY OF THE PEOPLE WITH THEIR CONSCRIPTED SONS." THE PEOPLE AND THE ARMED FORCES MUST BE IN COMPLETE BROTHERHOOD SO THAT "THE ARMY IS BUT AN EXTENSION OF THE PEOPLE AND THE PEOPLE BUT

AN EXTENSION OF THE ARMY." AGAINST THAT BACKGROUND, THE EDITORIAL CALLS FOR "A CHANGE OF TACTICS." IT ASSERTS THAT IT IS TIME THAT A DIFFERENT VOICE BE USED TO ANSWER THE PROVOCATIONS OF TURKISH CHAUVINISM. A NATION WHICH WANTS TO WIN ITS JUST CAUSE MUST BE READY TO CLAIM IT," THE EDITORIAL ARGUES.

5. THE ACROPOLIS EDITORIAL CONSTITUTES A HARD HITTING PIECE WHICH TRACES THE RECENT HISTORY OF GREEK-TURKISH RELATIONS GIVING SPECIAL EMPHASIS TO THE TRAGEDY OF 1922 WHEN THE TRADITIONAL GREEK PRESENCE IN ASIA MINOR WAS VIRTUALLY ANNIHILATED. IT CASTIGATES THE "BARBARIAN" TURKS WHO OCCUPY THE ANATOLIAN COAST NOW, AND RECALLS THAT VENIZELOS LABELLED THEM AS AN ASIATIC PEOPLE. IT ACCUSES THE CURRENT TURKISH REGIME OF USING "SALAMI TACTICS" WITH AN AIM TO SWALLOW THE GREEK ISLANDS. IT PROCLAIMS THAT THE ONLY PROPER RESPONSE TO SUCH A PROVOCATION IS A "COUNTER-ATTACK" AND THAT ACCORDINGLY THE GREEK SIDE FOR ITS PART MUST DEMAND ITS OWN RIGHTS AS THEY APPLY TO EASTERN THRACE AND TO "CONSTANTINOPLE". IT ACCUSES THE TURKS OF ESPOUSING A TRULY EXPANSIONIST POLICY AND THAT THEIR TACTICS CONSIST OF "CONSTANTLY PUSHING THE GREEKS UNTIL THEIR BACKS ARE AGAINST THE WALL." IT PREDICTS THAT THE TURKS WILL CONTINUALLY ASSERT DEMANDS AND MAKE UNJUSTIFIED ACCUSATIONS. THE ONLY SOLUTION SAYS ACROPOLIS IS FOR THE GREEKS THEMSELVES TO VOICE THEIR OWN DEMANDS. WHILE ASSERTING THAT THE GREEK PEOPLE ARE PEACEFUL AND NOT EXPANSIONIST BY NATURE, IT STATES THAT IF A HALT IS NOT NOW CALLED TO TURKISH STRATEGY AND TACTICS, GREEKS WILL FIND THEMSELVES ONCE MORE FIGHTING FOR THEIR "HOME AND HEARTH," ON THEIR OWN SOIL, IN THEIR OWN GARDEN AND BEFORE THEIR VERY DOORS. THE ARTICLE CONCLUDES BY EVOKING THE IMAGE OF ST. SOPHIA LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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CHURCH IN ISTANBUL WHICH HAD BEEN A SYMBOL OF GREEK CHRISTIAN CIVILIZATION AND WHICH FOR A THOUSAND YEARS SERVED AS A BARRIER TO THE BARBARIANS BEFORE IT WAS "MOST PROVOCATIVELY TURNED INTO A MOSQUE." KUBISCH

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